

# Churchmen and the Problem of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Scotland

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"Jeremiah Snooks, a captain of a ship, was unfortunately led into a common bawdy-house in Bell Street by a frail nightingale, possessed by Mr Shirra . . . he had a gill of whisky, for which he paid one shilling, and five shillings for the use of the room, over and above the nightingale's present . . . he had scarcely time to regale himself and friend, when a trifling dispute arose betwixt him and the landlord, or more properly speaking, the house-bully."

He was assaulted, thrown out and found by a policeman "weltering in his blood"; the house was surrounded by police till daylight, when Shirra, his "spouse" and five girls were arrested; eventually the nightingale turned evidence and Shirra was convicted.<sup>1</sup> For such a girl the Glasgow Magdalene Asylum, opened in 1815 by the Society for the Encouragement of Penitents, and the slightly older asylum of the Edinburgh Philanthropic, were for long the only institutions in Scotland offering help. Their appearance marked a small reaction to one of the many new problems of industrial Scotland. The profession, with its medical concomitants, was indeed an old one, and Scotland had shared with western Europe in the late fifteenth-century outbreak of venereal disease ("grandgore"), while a later variety, "sibbens" was commonly said to have been introduced by Cromwell's soldiers.<sup>2</sup> To "get a pair of Canongait breeches" was the eighteenth-century Edinburgh expression,<sup>3</sup> and the fate of Cope's army was attributed by some to the aftermath of a stay in the capital.

So much which could on a small scale be ignored or contained within existing sanctions, grew into fearsome spectres with new economic conditions and population patterns. There were two known brothels in Ayr at the beginning of the nineteenth century and no street soliciting;<sup>4</sup> but from 1825-1835 an epidemic of sibbens spread through the county.<sup>5</sup> In Edinburgh in 1763 there were five or six houses, and one might go from the Castle to Holy-

<sup>1</sup> John Brownlie, *Police Reports of causes tried before the Justices of the Peace* (1829), pp. 23-27.

<sup>2</sup> J. Y. Simpson, *Antiquarian notices of syphilis in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1862), a reprint from the *Transactions of the Epidemiological Society of London*, vol. i, part 2. G. M. Cullen, "Concerning sibbens and the Scottish yaws", *Caledonian Medical Journal*, (1911), vol. viii, p. 388.

<sup>3</sup> E. C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume* (1954), p. 243.

<sup>4</sup> Anon., *Reminiscences of Auld Ayr* (1864), p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Dr Wills, Cumnock, in *London and Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science* (1844), vol. iv, pp. 282-289.

rood at any hour of the night without being accosted. Twenty years later there were 20 times as many houses and "every quarter of the city and suburbs was infested with multitudes" of street-walkers.<sup>6</sup> This was the era of Ranger's *Impartial List of the Ladies of Pleasure in Edinburgh* (1775), fathered sometimes, probably incorrectly, upon James "Balloon" Tytler,<sup>7</sup> and the situation was less immediately due to the Industrial Revolution than to the development of Edinburgh society at this time. It was in Edinburgh that the first positive action was taken, when a group of Christian laymen called a public meeting (1797) and instituted the Edinburgh Philanthropic.<sup>8</sup> An attempt by its secretary, John Campbell, the evangelical ironmonger, to start a similar society in Glasgow attracted some attention in the Press,<sup>9</sup> but was not very successful. The directors of the Glasgow Lock Hospital (begun in 1805 by a group of doctors,<sup>10</sup>) distressed that those whom they cured had frequently no alternative but to return to the streets, sought in vain for help from the managers of this first Magdalene asylum.<sup>11</sup> It was not until the work of the Rev. Stevenson McGill, and the Glasgow Society for the Encouragement of Penitents, that anything effective was done. With the "warmest interest" from ministers of every denomination, six of whom were among its 30 directors, a functioning asylum was set up, supported by the "scanty benevolence" of the city and by collections in congregational, episcopalian and parish churches. It ministered to the growing problem for the next 25 years, averaging 32 inmates, and claiming, more modestly than some of its contemporaries, a success rate of 32 per cent.<sup>12</sup>

The Society for the Encouragement of Penitents had proposed work among boys, but this did not flourish; only in the late 1830s was a successful House of Refuge for delinquent boys set up, when

<sup>6</sup> W. Creech in *Statistical Account of Scotland* (1793), vol. vi, appendix, pp. 612-613. The unknown English soldier quoted by Mossner, loc. cit., however speaks of "vast numbers of bawdy houses" in the Canongate.

<sup>7</sup> J. Fergusson, *Balloon Tytler* (1972), pp. 41-42.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Philip, *The Life, Times and Missionary Enterprises of the Rev. J. C. Campbell* (1841), p. 152. *An address to the public in favour of the Magdalene Asylum, Edinburgh, instituted in 1797.* Edinburgh, 1804.

<sup>9</sup> Philip, loc. cit.; there was much discussion in the *Glasgow Courier*, 15th and 31st Jan., 16th and 21st Feb., 2nd March 1805, references for which I am indebted to Mrs Manchester, Baillie's Library, Glasgow.

<sup>10</sup> *Glasgow Lock Hospital, First Report*, 1806.

Idem, p. 3. Five years later they still "regret the total want of a Magdalene Institution", Report 1811.

<sup>12</sup> *Regulations for the Society for the Encouragement of Penitents*, McGill's Sermon at the opening of the Asylum is in his *Discourses and Essays* (Edinburgh, 1818). No complete run of Reports is known to me but I have seen those of 1814, 1815, 1816, 1819, 1820.

its results encouraged the provost and magistrates to wish the work extended to include girls, and to propose a dual role for the Magdalene.<sup>13</sup> New buildings to accommodate 150 (later again extended), were built; but the Act for Repressing Juvenile Delinquency (1841) specified age limits of over 15 and under 25, thus preventing the Magdalene Asylum from contributing to work amongst the younger prostitutes, which some saw as the most urgent need of the time, and which had given rise to the London Society for the Protection of Young Females (1835).<sup>14</sup>

There was some compensation for the reduced role of the Magdalene Asylum in the arrival of Glasgow of a most experienced and zealous worker, William Logan, one of Naismith's city missionaries, whose compassion and concern for the work had been roused by a dying 16-year-old in a London brothel. Later, in Leeds where a Guardian society had run an asylum for some years, Logan met, through the congregation to which he belonged, a fellow-member, a married woman who had herself been on the streets, and was prepared to talk about her former life. In Glasgow (1841) he was directed to work in Stirling Street. Three addresses in the street housed brothels; number eight was a close containing three six- or seven-roomed flats—the "Three Decker" whose name and fame had reached Logan in London. One of these was a "first-class house", patronised by upper-class customers who were charged one or two pounds. Madam claimed half this fee; from the girl's half were deducted her board, the hire of her clothes, and the hire of her jewellery, charges which usually kept her in debt, an added obstacle to her leaving the life. Now, with the assistance of the Rev. Dr Heugh, Sir James Anderson, William Campbell of Tullichewan, and Henry Miller, the chief of police, Logan was successful after a three years' struggle in clearing the street.<sup>15</sup>

Out of his experiences Logan wrote *An Exposure of Female Prostitution* (1843), a daring book to write at the time; but helped by a foreword from the Rev. William Anderson, John Street Secession Church, three editions, 7,000 copies were soon sold. *Moral Statistics of Glasgow* followed in 1849, but by this time Logan, now secretary of a temperance organisation, was inclined to blame everything simplistically on strong drink. Interest in the problem was not confined to Glasgow. The agent of the London Society for the Protection of Young Females, Mr Greig, was touring Scotland, speaking of the success of the society in lobbying officialdom until many of the London brothels had been closed,

<sup>13</sup> *Report on the House of Refuge for Females* (1840).

<sup>14</sup> J. D. Bryce, *The Glasgow Magdalene Asylum, its past and present* (1859), pp. 4-7. Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, *Lectures on Female Prostitution* (second edition, 1843), pp. 147 f.

<sup>15</sup> William Logan, *An exposure of female prostitution* (1843); *Moral statistics of Glasgow* (1849); *The great social evil* (1871).



and encouraging the formation of auxiliaries in Edinburgh and Glasgow with the aims of seeking improved repressive legislation, active suppression of brothels, and publicity for the problem. A meeting in Glasgow under the chairmanship of the provost, James Campbell, set up a committee of ministers to discuss publicity and education (16th February 1842). The Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, a congregationalist who had been involved in the work from the foundation of the Society for the Encouragement of Penitents, was invited to give public lectures, but so embarrassing was such a request, that it was made in the form of a petition signed by 38 ministers and 1,100 Glasgow citizens. On 30th, 31st May and 1st June, Wardlaw gave his lectures to an all-male, all-ticket audience, and later, now expanded to four lectures, he repeated them in Edinburgh at the request of the auxiliary there. They were published in August 1842.<sup>16</sup> With the experience of a lifetime from which to draw, few men were so well equipped to deal with the subject, but Wardlaw chose to be a repeater of other men's opinions. One of those on whom he relied was Dr William Tait, Surgeon to the Edinburgh Lock Hospital, whose book on *Magdalenism* was in its second edition.<sup>17</sup> When a conference in Edinburgh (1856) set up a committee to conduct an enquiry, it was Tait who edited the *Report*.<sup>18</sup> It was based on information sought from city missionaries and other social workers, from 15 penitentiaries in London, 33 in the provincial towns and six each in Scotland and Ireland. It was an uncomfortable report and the Rev. Thomas Guthrie told his congregation:

"Under a fair and beautiful exterior, there is an extent of corruption, vile corruption, loathsome corruption, which has only to be laid bare to astonish all, and I believe, to sicken many. Propriety forbids details . . . otherwise I would raise a curtain, I could reveal that which might make your hair stand on end."<sup>19</sup>

More active work was planned for Edinburgh, and a year or two later "excellent philanthropic gentlemen who reside in Edinburgh" formed an association, the Scottish National Association for the Suppression of License and the Recovery of the Fallen, which was to publish a long report on what it saw to be the causes of the social evil.<sup>20</sup>

By now the National Association for Social Science provided (from 1857 onwards) an annual platform for public (or near

<sup>16</sup> The second edition, 1843, is used here.

<sup>17</sup> William Tait, *Magdalenism* (2nd edition, 1842).

<sup>18</sup> *Report on Female Prostitution* (Edinburgh, 1857); Bryce, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> Rev. Thomas Guthrie, *The city: its sins and its sorrows* (Edinburgh, 1857), p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> *Meliora*, a quarterly review of social science (1864), vol. vi, pp. 306 ff. "The social evil and its causes".

public) discussion, and, the year after the Association commenced, Dr W. Acton's work<sup>21</sup> provided a wealth of first-hand information and informed opinion. It was not all acceptable opinion. There was soon a flourishing debate as to whether or not prostitution was a speedy road to destruction for the women involved. Acton thought not, and argued that, though some might soon succumb, for many others life on the streets was a temporary phase from which they had little difficulty in reintegrating themselves with society. Many rejected this view. Miller, the Glasgow police chief, had stated that five years was the longest any woman survived, Wardlaw accepted this, speaking of a fifth of the city's prostitutes dying annually, and Tait had put it as low as three years.<sup>22</sup> That the wages of sin should be such speedy destruction appealed to the guardians of public virtue. In part it was only an argument about definitions; prostitution covered a great many social classes, as Hemyng's analysis showed, from the park woman, lowest of the low, to the expensively kept lady with her horses and carriage, and to the prosperous ex-prostitutes who ran first-class houses.<sup>23</sup> A woman would last longer in some categories than in others; indeed her chances in the struggle for survival might be enhanced rather than otherwise by a spell as a prostitute. To many girls of the Edinburgh closes, successful prostitution was a rise not a fall, and they could echo the remark of a London sister, "when I was a little ragged girl of 12 years old I never dreamed that I would enjoy such luxuries".<sup>24</sup>

Mary McKinnon, who ran a house of ill-fame on the South Bridge, Edinburgh, had evidently come to her trade early, claimed to have pursued it on the Continent and in the West Indies and was between 35 and 40 and apparently in good health when she died at the hands of the public executioner for a murder done in her house.<sup>25</sup> It was indeed the assumption of all reclamation work that members of this class could leave it and reintegrate with society; and if, as Acton claimed, some girls managed to reclaim themselves, it ought not to have pained the reformers.

<sup>21</sup> William Acton, *Prostitution considered in its moral, social and sanitary aspects* (London, 1857, 2nd edition, 1870).

<sup>22</sup> Tait, *op. cit.*, p. 226; Wardlaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 f.; James Cleland, *Dissolute characters in former and present times in the city of Glasgow*. Cleland prints a letter from Henry Miller, superintendent of police, in which he admits there were prostitutes who had been 15 or 20 years on the streets, but these are "exceptions".

<sup>23</sup> Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, vol. iv, pp. 26-27.

<sup>24</sup> The editor of the *North Briton*, *Glimpses of the Social Evil in Edinburgh* (1864), p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> *An account of the execution of Mary McKinnon, who was executed at Edinburgh on Wednesday, 16th of April 1823*, Edinburgh, n.d. A copy of this broadside, with two others about the same affair is in Glasgow University Library, Mu 1 x 11.

When we consider the economics of the business, we shall see how easily this could happen.<sup>26</sup>

It is clear that from the 1840s the problem was beginning to emerge from the conspiracy of silence, though over 20 years later (1866) a speaker at the Harveian Medical Society claimed it to be only the second discussion in a medical society for many years.<sup>27</sup> One element in the situation now forcing public notice was increasing anxiety about venereal disease. The existence of the Lock Hospitals showed a long-standing acceptance of a medical problem, but the nineteenth century brought increasing worries. An advertisement in the *Glasgow Chronicle* (22nd October 1830) commended Dr Cullen's highly celebrated abstergent Scarlet Pills, claiming that they were the most infallible anti-venereal ever discovered and assuring sufferers that they could "speedily . . . cure themselves with safety and secrecy". By mid-century the problem was massive. The Report on Army Diseases (1837-47) speaks of 27.7 per cent infantry, 25.0 per cent foot guards, and 20.6 per cent cavalry affected; Dr Gordon, surgeon to the 51st, reported in 1851 that he had in one year treated 113 out of a strength of 400.<sup>28</sup> By 1860 estimates for the whole population were put in the region of one and a half million, though a social science journal, *Meliora*, thought there might be three times that number, speaking of "the black shadow of an avenging social nemesis . . .".<sup>29</sup> The effect was to heighten interest and the call for positive action. The belief that this ought to include legal measures was increasing. These last had been shown to be useful in England in the work of the Society for the Protection of Young Females, and, though the legal situation was different in Scotland, there was a call with each new Police Act for more effective powers over brothels and streetwalkers.<sup>30</sup> The limits of legal intervention were to have a prolonged discussion in the period of the Contagious Diseases Acts.

To the emotional element, provided by fear of disease, there were added an intellectual element provided by the new interest

<sup>26</sup> "In those times of mercantile distress many females may through poverty be driven to courses which in times of prosperity they would in all probability never have descended to". *Glasgow Lock Hospital Report*, 1810. As times improved they disappeared again from the streets.

<sup>27</sup> Dr Drysdale, *Prostitution medically considered* (1866). The preface to the second edition of Wardlaw speaks of his anxieties over "the propriety of its publication and the reception it might meet with" but though he knows some would "keep from meeting the eye of any member of their domestic circle" the "very title" of his book, he is evidently confident in repelling "overstrained and morbid apprehensiveness". Op. cit., pp. xi-xii.

<sup>28</sup> Acton, op. cit., pp. 39, 41.

<sup>29</sup> Vol. iii (1861), p. 145 ff. *Contemporary Review* (1870), p. 222, "an epidemic . . . suffered to race unchecked".

<sup>30</sup> Mayhew, op. cit., pp. 211-212; *Magdalene Institute Report*, 1860, p. 8 note.; Wardlaw, pp. 156-7; Idem p. 159.



in the social sciences, and a new religious concern stemming from the revivals of 1859-1861. The National Society for the Study of the Social Sciences attracted Scottish interest from its first Congress (Birmingham, 1857) at which the Rev. James Begg spoke on Scottish housing. In 1860 the Congress met in Glasgow, when the Rev. Dr Robertson of the High Church told its members that their aims were "connected closely with the high ends for which our Saviour came into the world, and for which the Christian Church has been established; for he takes but a narrow view of her constant prayer, "Thy Kingdom come", who does not consider that everything which pertains to the race physically, intellectually, morally and socially as well as spiritually, in the stricter sense, falls within the sphere of Christian aspiration and effort.<sup>31</sup> The Rev. William Arnot addressed the Punishment and Reformation Section on "the Social Evil", and Dr Guthrie's comments were liberally reported in the Press. Leading Christian laymen like J. D. Bryce (secretary of the Glasgow Magdalene), Alexander Thomson (Banchory), and Sheriff Watson (Aberdeen) took part. It does not seem too much to attribute the elaborate and detailed information which the Glasgow Magdalene Institute obtained and published from its first interim report onwards to its acceptance of the standards set by the interest in the Social Sciences. This intellectual approach was backed at this point by the extensive religious awakening in which almost all areas in Scotland shared at this time. One of the best known of the evangelists of the movement, Reginald Ratcliffe, included Midnight Meetings with prostitutes both in Aberdeen and in Edinburgh in his work.<sup>32</sup> The Ladies' Society for the Rescue of Fallen Females appears in Aberdeen from 1861 onwards, and the Paisley Society for the Reclamation of Fallen Women begins in the same year.<sup>33</sup>

New thinking about the needs of the situation in Glasgow had been reflected in a paper read by J. D. Bryce, secretary of the old Magdalene, to some friends. These insisted on obtaining a wider audience for his views, and a public meeting set up a committee to implement them. Bryce had crystallized a feeling in Glasgow that the city's efforts to repress the evil and to rescue its victims had become "painfully disproportionate to the increase of the city's population and wealth". The existing machinery had been devised when the city was a quarter of its

<sup>31</sup> *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science*, (1860), pp. 1-2.

<sup>32</sup> Mrs Radcliffe, *Memorials of Reginald Radcliffe*, p. 41. The Edinburgh meeting was in Richmond Place Chapel, *Glasgow Courier*, 15th Nov. 1860.

<sup>33</sup> *Fifth Report of the Ladies' Association for the Rescue of Fallen Females* (1866); the eleventh annual meeting of the Paisley Society for the Reclamation of Fallen Women is reported, *Glasgow Herald*, 1872.

present size; now new action was "sacred and urgent".<sup>34</sup> The result was the Magdalene Institution, with two areas of concern, repression to restrict the evil, and reclamation; each interest had a sectional committee within the parent body. The latter had 37 directors, but unlike the old society, these included no ministers (until 1879), other than Principal Fairbairn and Professor Douglas of the Free Church College, and these may well have been regarded as operating as elders.<sup>35</sup> Assured of the goodwill of the Glasgow ministry, this was a lay body, and its laymen were to a great extent the leading citizens of the town (merchants, lawyers, doctors, a newspaper editor), as well as the elders and office-bearers of its churches. John Henderson of Park was president.<sup>36</sup>

Repression started immediately with Parry's Theatre, open thrice nightly and four times on Saturday, objectionable both for what it presented, and for the teenagers who congregated there. When it proved difficult to shut, John Henderson simply bought it, and handed it over to be a centre for Sunday mission work and week-night education.<sup>37</sup>

The next enemy had greater powers of resistance. The directors set out to suppress Glasgow Fair. It had never had a very savoury reputation and the Glasgow roads to ruin were summed up as "drink, dress and the Glasgow Fair".<sup>38</sup> A broadside of about 1820 is entitled: "*A complete list of all the sporting ladies who are to be in Glasgow during the Fair, with the names, characters, where they are to be found, together with an account of their different prices.*"<sup>39</sup> Evidently the sporting ladies gathered not only from Scotland but from south of the Border. The tariff started with a Miss Brown, who demanded half a guinea, and went down to those who would oblige for a drink.

To this extent the Fair had changed by the sixties: for over a decade the upper working class had become more and more able to leave the city for its brief holiday.<sup>40</sup> The Fair became more and more stridently lower class. Its five acting theatres, nine exhibitions, six peepshows, two waxworks and a circus occupied ground rented to them by the Town Council, who, petitioned by

<sup>34</sup> J. M. Bryce, *op. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> The Magdalene had originally 69 directors, including Professor Douglas (*Interim Report, 1860*); the Edinburgh Magdalene had 36, of whom nine, including the secretary, were ministers (*Report, 1844*).

<sup>36</sup> I am grateful to the Librarian of the Royal Society of Procurators, Glasgow, for access to the *Reports, 1860-82*; Aberdeen University Library supplied an Xerox of the *Interim Report (1860)*; 1885-86 are in the Glasgow Room of the Mitchell Library.

<sup>37</sup> *Report, 1860*, p. 6. Henderson had had ideas about a theatre for some time; see a report of an early survey (1855) in M. Connal, *Diary*, p. 102.

<sup>38</sup> Logan, *Great Social Evil*, p. 73.

<sup>39</sup> Copy in Glasgow University Library, Mu 1 x 11.

<sup>40</sup> C. A. Oakley, *The Second City (1946)*, p. 140.



the Directors of the Magdalene, tended to procrastinate. The directors sub-divided the area into convenient units and had it patrolled during the Fair, printing accounts of what was heard and seen, the "acts" (women tumblers, a woman dancing naked to the waist, etc.), the crowds, the general behaviour, the number of prostitutes seen around, and a list of the houses of ill-fame in the area; this last included one close in the Trongate (No. 49) said to house 14 brothels,<sup>41</sup> perhaps the close which Professor Robert Flint, then a young missionary employed by the Elders' Association, positively refused to enter.<sup>42</sup> It took ten years' campaigning but, in 1870, after an independent public meeting and protest, the council decided they would let the ground no longer.<sup>43</sup>

There was purpose in gathering addresses of houses of ill-fame; these were checked with the valuation roll, after which the owners received a letter asking if they knew what was being done with their property.<sup>44</sup> The subject was a sensitive one. On the one hand in addition to the obliquity of harbouring vice, the offender was reducing the value of surrounding property, "creating the worst of all nuisances, to destroy the property of a neighbourhood";<sup>45</sup> on the other hand the temptation was so great, and landlords liked brothels, charging higher rates to sooth their ravaged consciences.<sup>46</sup> The editor of the *North Briton* put the issue compactly, "the factor . . . prefers to let his houses as brothels to having in them respectable working men. The brothel keeper can always pay the rent considerably in advance. There is no trouble in finding security—no risk. Moreover brothels pay more, and so are proportionately valuable. The factor knows perfectly well for what purpose the house is taken . . . All the while he is a most 'respectable' man who would not stay away from church for any consideration".<sup>47</sup> The wife of a man in a Government position in Glasgow let several furnished houses for second-class brothels, visiting them regularly to collect the rent, and another citizen who had been "knighted for his public service and was highly regarded for his philanthropy" had brothels and shebeens in his property, disowning personal responsibility "being a very busy man he left the management to his house factor".<sup>48</sup> The directors of the Magdalene put the town council under pressure,

<sup>41</sup> Two reports on the Fair were published separately, marked "private". Copies are bound with the annual reports in the Procurators' Library.

<sup>42</sup> Donald Macmillan, *The Life of Robert Flint* (1914), p. 77.

<sup>43</sup> *Report*, 1870.

<sup>44</sup> *Report*, 1860.

<sup>45</sup> Rev. T. Guthrie, loc. cit.

<sup>46</sup> The rent was "double and treble". Logan, *Great Social Evil*, pp. 177-178.

<sup>47</sup> Op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>48</sup> A. E. Garvie, *Memories and meanings of my life* (1938), p. 73.

and a deputation spelled out for them the powers they already possessed under the Police Acts but did not always use. This was effective and through the seventies the annual reports have nothing but praise for the vigilance of the police and magistrates.

On another front they fought with less success. It was astonishing and shocking that taxpayers' money should annually be voted by Parliament to the Royal Academy and other schools where drawing from the nude was practised. "The returns ordered by Parliament on this subject are of a character so shameless and so shocking to all right feeling that the details cannot be given without revolting our readers". Here, however, the protests were unavailing.<sup>49</sup>

On the reclamation side of the Magdalene's work there was a sober acceptance of the real difficulties which faced a girl trying to get off the streets. The girls "may really be wishful to do well, but few of them have counted the cost", and the attempt to change to a new life is "apt almost to overwhelm" so that its restraints may be felt as a grievance for a long period. "Where there is a change of heart . . . the period may be shortened, but as a general rule a somewhat lengthened period may be and ought to be anticipated", in fact what a later secretary called "time and opportunity to learn and unlearn".<sup>50</sup> J. D. Bryce was very open to new ideas about the needs of the girls—no delays in admission, no uniform, small, graded hostels with a minimum of restraint ("the freedom enjoyed in a well-regulated family"), music, cheerfulness, love, gladness—and warned that "there is a danger of making religion a weariness by the constant repetition of its truths . . . its serious lessons . . . should never be too long". Clearly this revaluation owes much to the work of an ex-naval lieutenant, John Blackmore.<sup>51</sup> Invalided out after extensive injuries received during the firing of a salute in honour of the King of the Belgians, Blackmore began the London by Moonlight Mission. He had decided early that the typical refuge, where a girl might be kept waiting while a committee met, where she would have her hair cut, be clad in the roughest of uniforms and kept under lock and key, was not a useful approach, and provided dormitories open at all times and graded to different classes of girl. They had the minimum of restrictions, and gave opportunities for the girls to refresh or improve their education or skills; ex-governesses, for example, were encouraged to brush up their music and French. Blackmore was dead by 1860 when his work was succeeded by the Midnight Meeting movement, no longer — like its predecessor — confined to the capital. By the

<sup>49</sup> *Report*, 1860, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup> *Idem*. R. W. Sinclair in *Glasgow Herald*, 14th May 1874. J. D. Bryce, *The Glasgow Magdalene Asylum*, pp. 8-10.

<sup>51</sup> *The Scottish Review* (Scottish Temperance League, Glasgow, 1860), pp. 321 ff. "The London by Moonlight Mission".

appearance of the fourth volume of Mayhew there had been 22 meetings, attended by some 4,000 girls, and more than 600 rescues were claimed. 'Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee were among the towns affected.'<sup>52</sup>

The prime mover in Glasgow was the Rev. A. N. Somerville of Anderston Free Church. His biographer puts the problem:—

The ordinary evangelistic meetings failed to attract. The usual methods of moral and spiritual excavation succeeded with but a few. Even where these were successful for a time . . . the asylums and reformatories failed too often to keep them. Moralizing methods were then too often marked by ignorance of human nature, a want of sympathy with the tempted, and absence of the self-sacrificing spirit of Christ . . . The few purity reformers surrounded their organisation with all that was repulsive and the churches shut their eyes.<sup>53</sup>

With the backing of a number of laymen, most of them directors of the Magdalene Institute, Somerville set to work. He called in a lady to do preliminary work, reported in a pamphlet, "The Omnipotence of Loving Kindness"<sup>54</sup> He was in touch with English workers, notably with Mrs Shepherd of Frome, one of the exponents of the new approach, and at a public meeting in the City Hall in June 1860 he described to his audience (largely women) what had happened at his first meeting. A delivery of cards through the streets was followed by a midnight meeting at which ladies and gentlemen of his congregation met the girls who gathered; there was an appeal to the girls to give up their way of life, accompanied by a promise to provide work, to provide accommodation in a private house (for which the girl would pay from her earnings), and to extend a constant welcome at the church whose members would visit each girl daily and stand by her in all her need. Employers and providers of lodgings were guaranteed against loss. Over a period of 17 months, 72 girls were influenced and for at least 36 the effect seemed permanent. As Somerville later toured the world as a travelling evangelist he was met in the colonies by girls whom he had forgotten, whose married names he did not know, eager to speak of what they owed to this work. The Midnight Meeting appeared again in Glasgow during the Moody and Sankey Campaign (1874), not

<sup>52</sup> Mayhew, *op. cit.*, pp xxxv ff.

<sup>53</sup> George Smith, *A Modern Apostle* (1890), pp. 75-85. *Glasgow Herald*, 6th July 1860.

<sup>54</sup> Mrs R. *The omnipotence of loving-kindness*. Somerville speaks of having first received the assistance of an unnamed lady whom I assume to be the 'Mrs R.' of the pamphlet, but the Magdalene Institute Reports seem to speak as though this were an independent effort and the B.M. *Catalogue of Printed Books*, attributes the pamphlet to Jacob Wakefield Maegill, Manchester. I have failed to see a copy.



run nor attended by the evangelists themselves but by a group of their supporters.<sup>55</sup> Of the remainder of the period up to 1885, I have no space to write here. It was occupied by the prolonged controversy over the attempt to control prostitution by law, included the work of at least two Parliamentary commissions and would deserve separate treatment. It ended with the suspension, then the repeal of the offensive Contagious Diseases Acts 1886. In the previous year the Criminal Law Amendment Act marked the end of a period of the history of prostitution in this country.<sup>56</sup>

The Glasgow Magdalene Institution is remarkable for the detail of its reports from 1860 onwards. For the first part of the century neither the Glasgow Lock Hospital, nor the asylums in Glasgow or Edinburgh offer anything like this wealth of information and one depends almost entirely upon the impressions of social workers and of police, sometimes confirmed, sometimes questioned by later statistics. The remainder of this paper deals with the picture to be drawn from the Glasgow statistics, but some comment must be given on their limitations.

They give no immediate picture of the size of the problem, for the number of prostitutes who came to the Magdalene was minuscule compared with the total number on the street. A Glasgow police survey of 1840 was for long the only statistic—204 brothels, 1,475 inmates<sup>57</sup>—and every writer quoted it though it was obviously defective in that it gave no help about the number of “sly” prostitutes, i.e. girls independent of brothels, and these were recognised to be much in the majority. A second police figure for 1849—211 houses, 1,047 prostitutes—merely suggests the police were not really trying.<sup>58</sup> Population was steadily rising by 2 per cent to 2½ per cent every ten years<sup>59</sup> and the number of prostitutes was undoubtedly growing also. By about 1880 the theologian A. E. Garvie, then a young man in the warehouse of Arthur & Co. quotes the saying: “It is easier to get to know a bad woman on the street than a good woman in the house”.<sup>60</sup> It is noticeable that in the Magdalene there were two prostitutes who had not been in the Lock for every one who had. Does this mean that in general the prostitute population of Glasgow was about three times as large as the number of inmates of the Lock? This would suggest a total of between 6,000 and 7,000, but it has to be admitted this is highly speculative on a subject which continually has attracted the wildest guesswork. It refers to a five-year period for which it is improbably low. The only thing

<sup>55</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 7th, 11th and 14th March 1874.

<sup>56</sup> K. Chesney, *The Victorian Underworld* (1970), p. 364.

<sup>57</sup> Miller's letter in Cleland, *op. cit.*, p. 2. The literature is full of unhelpful guesses with no sound basis of calculation.

<sup>58</sup> George Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>59</sup> 1861, 395, 503; 1871, 477, 732; 1881, 511, 415; J. Nicol, *The vital statistics of the city of Glasgow, 1885-1891*, p. 20.

<sup>60</sup> A. E. Garvie, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

which appears safe to say is that there were more prostitutes than the police noticed, and fewer than the moralists imagined.

One must see the Magdalene figures as doubly selective. It was almost at once realised by the managers of the Lock that there were two kinds of patient, those who were too brutalised to be restored to society, and those who seemed possible recoveries.<sup>61</sup> The Magdalene tried to distinguish between these, and rejected unsuitable girls. Their reports therefore do not tell us about the rejected girls. At the other end of the spectrum, there were successful girls who stayed on the street, or married successfully off it. They had no need of the Magdalene. The reports of the latter therefore only tell us of the girls who opted out, but were unable to help themselves; it is almost as if we attempted a study of business solely on the records of the bankruptcy courts.

Finally there is a built-in predisposition towards error in the fact that the informants, the girls themselves, were unlikely to be "superstitiously truthful"; in fact many were quite frankly romancers. Mary McKinnon of Edinburgh told a tale of how, she, a quartermaster's daughter, was seduced by an Army officer on the evening of her mother's funeral; it was almost complete fantasy. So all the case histories, etc. must remain to some extent suspect. With these qualifications, what is to be discovered? Girls arrived on the Glasgow streets from all over Scotland, from Ireland, from England and Wales, and by the 1870s, from almost anywhere in the world (Malta, India, the Falkland Isles, Australia, and the United States are mentioned among others). Earlier Miller had reported many Irish and Highland girls, and thought more than half came from the country.<sup>62</sup> In fact almost a third are Glasgow born; next in order as suppliers came Ireland, then the counties contiguous to Glasgow and affected by industrialisation, Lanark, and Renfrew. Ayr comes next and there is a pronounced drift from Edinburgh (reflecting job opportunities)<sup>63</sup> and about the same number of girls from England. There is undoubtedly a sprinkling of country girls, but the majority have been born and bred within the industrial urban society which they serve.

It had always been assumed that the group was recruited from the lower classes; "few of the applicants belong to the better educated and better provided for classes . . . the victims of prostitution in Glasgow are for the most part drawn from the very lowest stratum of society".<sup>64</sup> The listing of parental occupations

<sup>61</sup> *Report*, 1810, contrasts "patients who still have some appearance of decency" with patients "whose morals appear to be hopeless".

<sup>62</sup> In Cleland, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> "For every prostitute Glasgow sends to Edinburgh, the latter returns about three", Tait, *op. cit.*, p. 156 in Wardlaw, p. 108.

<sup>64</sup> *Magdalene Institute Report*, 1864, p. 10. Dr Hannay had also remarked on "the infrequency of the children of the middling classes falling into this sin", Wardlaw, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

now supports this. If the girls reported upon in Mayhew were to have been believed, the streets of London were full of the betrayed daughters of clergymen.<sup>65</sup> Daughters of Scottish manse were of sterner stuff, and on the Magdalene Institute lists, though an immense variety of trades and occupations of parents are listed, the number of girls claiming to come from homes of remotely professional standing is small indeed. Clearly some social groups were at special risks, notably the children of labourers and of colliers, followed by those of weavers, tailors, sailors, shoemakers and engineers.

To the class as a whole we could apply W. S. Gilbert's line, "We are all orphans"—a point which early was impressed on those who worked with the group.<sup>66</sup> The statistics underline this, showing over 50 per cent orphaned of both parents, and a further 36 per cent or more lacking one parent. In such a situation emotional instability, social exposure and exploitation by designing relatives and others follow as a matter of course. Two case histories may be quoted. A. was deprived of her parents as a child, and left with her sister to the care of the town in which she was born. When her sister was injured and admitted to the town's hospital. A. was put in charge of an aunt "who most unnaturally and inhumanly betrayed her when very young to a monster equally unprincipled". She ran away and reached Edinburgh. "Hungry and destitute . . . a person who met her advised her to sell two of her teeth, which she did and received for them two guineas on which she subsisted for a short time. Being recommended to come to Glasgow as a situation where employment might be more easily obtained she was accompanied by a woman whom she thought to be a respectable character but who, on pretence of calling on a friend again plunged poor A. into the depths of profligacy and misery".<sup>67</sup> E.H., an orphan, "had been little cared for, could read but indifferently, and could not write. At the age of 11 she had been placed in domestic service, in which she continued passing from house to house for seven years. Then she was led astray and for two years resided in houses of ill-fame".<sup>68</sup> By the time of this report, four years after her admission to the Magdalene, she was married and gone abroad. There are no statistics for this, but, on the basis of the case histories it looks as if about one in three of satisfactory girls did in fact get married.

E.H.'s defective reading and inability to write was perhaps only to be expected, and the Reports warn that even where girls are reckoned to possess these abilities, the actual performance may be minimal. The statistics here seem to hint at a collapse of

<sup>65</sup> Mayhew, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 217.

<sup>66</sup> *Magdalene Institute, Interim Report*, 1860, p. 11; *Reports*, *passim*; Logan, *Social Evil*, p. 76.

<sup>67</sup> *Society for the Encouragement of Penitents*, 1820.

<sup>68</sup> *Magdalene Institute Report*, 1864, p. 12.



education with a fall of ten per cent in those able to read from 1860-64 to 1875-79 (though those for whom ability to write is claimed, show a slight increase), but the group are far below the average performance for the period. Where 62 per cent of the inmates of the Homes cannot write, only 25.79 per cent of women marrying have to sign with a mark.<sup>69</sup> By our final period, 1880-86, the effects of the 1872 Education Act seem to be reaching even this area of the community, and ability to read and to write are at their highest in the period. The Society for the Encouragement of Penitents had provided teaching in reading and writing, and this, expanded to include music, remained a constant feature of the work of the Homes. Some girls made rapid progress—"during her 15 months stay in the home she learned to read and write with comfort"<sup>70</sup>—but the letters from grateful discharged girls which form a feature of some of the reports leave a doubt as to who was really responsible for their final condition.

It is curious that of the women in the Magdalene two-thirds should claim to have attended Sunday school. The claim must often have been based on very little, though it is just possible that girls with some attendance at Sunday school had a little more impulsion to accept the help offered by the Magdalene institute.

Many girls had no fixed occupation, but there is a great deal of information about the last jobs which they had held before coming on the street. About 1860, girls belonged to a limited number of categories, but the large numbers who were ex-service, or ex-factory, do not imply that girls so employed were specially prone to become street walkers; it only reflects the extremely restricted opportunities for gainful employment for women at this period. In Mayhew, much is made of the dolly-mop class, the little milliners, nursery maids and shop girls. But in Glasgow, either such girls fitted so successfully into a life of prostitution that they never found the need for Magdalene, or they were in fact as few in number as the statistics report. The largest single source is domestic service. This held a variety of perils, in addition to the males in the household; girls might be picked up by the wrong kind of acquaintance on their days off; or they might be tempted by their mistresses' dress and finery to wish for pretty vanities for themselves, and to see easy money as a means to that.<sup>71</sup> So said the moralists, but the Magdalene Reports say more soberly that the girls in fact came from very low grades of service. It was of course true of all grades that the girl who "got into trouble" found herself at once without work and without

<sup>69</sup> J. Nicol, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

<sup>70</sup> *Report*, 1864, p. 12.

<sup>71</sup> Mayhew, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 258; Professor J. Miller, *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, 1858-59, pp. 1003-1033 (a review of Acton); *Magdalene Reports*, 1863; Logan, *Great Social Evil*, pp. 266-7.

the references, lacking which no cautious mistress would employ her. This, one suspects, explains the entry "service and factory". Factories were, it was agreed, sources of bad girls, and those whom the lurking spies of the Magdalene Institute observed enjoying themselves at the Fair, or marching boldly off into the Glasgow Green (which one only did "for one purpose") are regularly classified as mill workers, or factory workers. The lack of moral supervision, the mixture of men and women, the road home through the streets at a late hour, were all commented on adversely; "in such establishments, chastity is unknown".<sup>72</sup> More significant than anything else were the lowness of the wages and the limited variety of work open to women and girls. Contemporaries were well aware that there were droves of women on the streets in times of industrial depression, who disappeared again when times improved.<sup>73</sup> Tait estimated that over 200 families in Edinburgh were largely, perhaps almost wholly, supported from the proceeds of prostitution,<sup>74</sup> and from such families girl-children went out to an apprenticeship on the streets as a matter of course. Miller mentions girls on the Glasgow streets at ten years of age, and the Magdalene statistics always show a group of under-fifteens. The editor of the *North Briton* maintained that in Edinburgh, to become a successful prostitute was a social and economic dream for many girls. "The aristocracy of our closes are brothel-keepers and prostitutes . . . These little girls . . . look forward and *upward* to the time when they will enter on their teens and walk the streets like those whom they envy".<sup>75</sup>

The new industrial society was soon offering employment to women, but at a low wage, and as that society expanded there was only a slow recognition of the possibilities of women as workers. Would-be reformers were constantly putting forward the need, not only for higher wages, but for a wider variety of work. Why—they ask—should it be assumed in so many shops and warehouses that it must be young men who do the work? Could not young women do much of it equally well? Could they not, for example, be clerks in post-offices? . . . and so on.<sup>76</sup> Our statistics

<sup>72</sup> Miller, *idem*; *Magdalene Interim Report*, 1860, p. 10; Wardlaw, *op. cit.*, 110-113.

<sup>73</sup> Miller in Cleland, *loc. cit.*; *cp.* "When several manufactories suddenly closed a few years ago, a great number of women were thrown out of employment and according to the opinion of the superintendent of police, five hundred of them resorted to prostitution for their support". Sheriff William Watson, Aberdeen, *Trans. Nat. Association for the Promotion of Social Science*, 1860, p. 460.

<sup>74</sup> Tait, p. 163, in Wardlaw, p. 109.

<sup>75</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> "Multitudes of men are employed in shop-work which *ought* to be done by women", *Meliora*, vol. i (1859), p. 78; Somerville reported in *Glasgow Herald*, 6th July 1860; see also *Meliora*, vol. vi, pp. 308 ff., reviewing the report of the Scottish National Association for the Suppression of License and the Restoration of the Fallen.

show something of the expansion of opportunities. In 1868 the entry "miscellaneous" shows two jappanners and three boot-binders, ten years later the list is:

Printing machinists	2
Photographer	1
Barmaid	1
Book-binder	1
Book-keeper	1
Fancy box maker	1
French polisher	1
Paper bag maker	1
Pottery workers	4

There is certainly a larger variety of work. But were the girls who reached the streets anyway in spite of it likely to have been at all competent workers? This one doubts.

There is another approach to the economic question. If for many prostitution was an economic necessity, there were those for whom it was a choice because of the useful spending margin it produced. Mayhew records a girl in reasonably good employment, and engaged to be married, who went on the streets occasionally because she admitted she lived above her income and wanted some luxuries.<sup>77</sup> Others again did make money, indeed considerable sums of money, in the business, though these were seldom the girls directly involved. Perhaps the prostitute who kept a brothel and left £20,000 to her daughter was exceptional (if not actually mythical), but there was undoubtedly money in the trade and with it, strongly vested interests which put obstacles in the way of reform.<sup>78</sup> The wealthy in the trade were backed by wealthy clients. Logan, of whose efforts to clean up Stirling Street we have heard, wrote of an equipage bearing a coat of arms on its panels, which gathered a crowd as it stood outside one of the Stirling Street brothels.<sup>79</sup> Tait quotes the retiral of an Edinburgh brothel-keeper in whose honour some of her wealthier clients gave a dinner. An earl presided and Madam received a handsome piece of plate for which she thanked the company, hoping that they would give her successor the custom which they had given her.<sup>80</sup> An abuse which so involved the lawgivers, was very difficult to dislodge.

One side issue is the question of procuring, aspects of which (for the continental market) occupied two House of Lords Reports in the period.<sup>81</sup> It figures in all the literature. A girl answers an

<sup>77</sup> Mayhew, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 255.

<sup>78</sup> *Meliora*, vol. iii, p. 148, which also claims 5,000 brothel-keepers with an annual profit of £1,000 each. The editor of the *North Briton* refers to what he calls "brothel power", *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>79</sup> Logan, *Great Social Evil*, p. 110.

<sup>80</sup> Tait, *op. cit.*, 101-3, in Wardlaw, p. 92.

<sup>81</sup> House of Lords, *Report of a Committee on the Law relating to the protection of Young Girls*, 1881, 1882.



advertisement for a post in the city, and too late discovers the kind of house to which she has been introduced. Or she wanders round the town on her day off, an obvious stranger, and a destined victim for the well-dressed, well-spoken lady who shows interest and sympathy, and invites her to come along for tea. . . . Or she may be stopped by a stranger with a parcel, and asked if she could spare a moment to take it to a given address. If she agrees, once at the door, she is whisked inside to her doom. It did happen. Tait spoke of "a green shop" which had been "the downfall of eight servant girls in the course of a year".<sup>82</sup> More simply, young girls were bought and sold; here the classic case was to be that of the journalist W. T. Stead.<sup>83</sup> Stead certainly made a purchase, but how wide were such practices? Dr Guthrie refers to at least four cases in his own Edinburgh congregation, but whether of deliberate procuring or of seduction and desertion is not clear.<sup>84</sup> The latter, promise of marriage, seduction, abandoning, and at last the streets, is the stock in trade of the ballad-maker.<sup>85</sup> But there are voices of doubt, that, for example, of the editor of the *North Briton*, who classifies as "altogether erroneous" the idea that the ranks of the prostitutes are full of the seduced. "There are no doubt women on the town who have fallen victims to the crime of seduction but they are so few as not to make it worth my while to consider their cases at all; they are mere exceptions to the general rule that prostitution in Edinburgh has become a trade to which girls serve an apprenticeship the same as they would have to do if they learned millinery or shoe-binding."<sup>86</sup>

Whatever the origin and character of the prostitute class, clearly it was to a large extent supported and even maintained in existence because of certain social practices and assumptions. The average age for marriage in the male was over 25, and the age tended to increase higher up the social scale. If one takes the situation in Glasgow, "Glasgow merchants were rich men in those days, but all of them without exception lived in fear of what the future might hold. And with reason, for scarcely a month passed in which somebody did not disappear"; moreover, "even the terraces and crescents of the West End were numbered and ticketed so that a man's social status might be accurately and instantly known from his address".<sup>87</sup> In such a society a man's home must reflect and confirm his economic viability, his credit status, and not in any way a threat to it. In practical terms this

<sup>82</sup> Tait, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-3, in Wardlaw, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>83</sup> A recent examination of the Stead case is, Ann Stafford, *The Age of Consent* (1964).

<sup>84</sup> T. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>85</sup> "The Village Born Beauty" (broadside in Glasgow University Library, Mu 22 x 13) is one of an abundant class of literature.

<sup>86</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>87</sup> R. McNair Wilson, *Doctor's Progress*, in Sir Charles Petrie, *The Victorians*, pp. 133-134.

meant as early as 1842 "high notions . . . of the style in which young men entering on life must set up their domestic establishment".<sup>88</sup> By 1857 "it is thought impossible in a large class of society now to marry unless you have £1,000, or £1,500 a year".<sup>89</sup> Indeed the observation becomes a tedious commonplace of social criticisms throughout the seventies. While the young man waited until he could afford a suitable home to which to take a bride, he amused himself in other ways. Prostitution owed much of its booming prosperity to the propertied classes' horror of imprudent marriages.<sup>90</sup>

What galled the critics still more was the fact that whatever a young man's reputation might be, if he were considered a sufficiently glittering catch on the marriage market, mama would discreetly ignore his wild oats.<sup>91</sup> No such liberty was accorded the young woman. She must be free from the least breath of scandal. Here is that characteristic Victorian ethos, the *Double Standard*. "Even an unchaste man will marry none but a chaste woman"<sup>92</sup> but the woman must make no such unnatural demand on the man. Men were different; such was the Victorian fact of life. It was improper to discuss it further. Again and again one is made to realise the risk taken by the writers of books and pamphlets in broaching the subject and one can understand why pulpits, the moral sounding boards of the age in a way we can hardly today appreciate, were on this matter, in all but a few instances, silent. The directors of every other religious and benevolent society are listed in the Glasgow Post Office Directories, but those of the Magdalene Institute are not. If the subject appeared at all, it appeared clad almost unrecognisably in euphemism. Yet it did in this form even at times reach the Victorian drawing room.

On the street the ballad singer sang of the troubles of the Glasgow Divinity student,

His lady-love at the Lock hangs out  
Her good priest daily sees her.  
She has walked his snuff-box up the spout  
And his holy books to the sneezer's.<sup>93</sup>

Later in the century,

As I was walking down by the Lock hospital  
As I was walking one morning of late,  
Who did I spy but mine own dear comrade,  
Wrapped up in flannel so hard is his fate.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Wardlaw, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

<sup>89</sup> *Times* leader, 9th May 1857, "Unnatural postponement of marriage ends in a great blot on our social system".

<sup>90</sup> K. Chesney, op. cit., pp. 316-317.

<sup>91</sup> Peter Bayne in *Magdalene Institute Report*, 1867, appendix C.

<sup>92</sup> P. Bayne, loc. cit.; Wardlaw, op. cit., pp. 97 ff.

<sup>93</sup> John Brownlie, op. cit., p. 80.

<sup>94</sup> Broadside in Glasgow University Library, Mu 22 x 13 (171).

In the drawing room they gathered round the piano, and heard, "She was only a bird in a gilded cage", or, by the same writers, "The Mansion of Aching Hearts"<sup>95</sup> However, as with the dear Poet Laureate's Lotus Eaters, the sounds of anguish seemed very faint and very far away.

# GLASGOW MAGDALENE INSTITUTE STATISTICS

Percentages in five-yearly periods

	1860-65	1865-69	1870-74	1875-79	'80, '81, '84-6
AGE when first "on street"					
under 14	6.6	3.8	5.4	3.7	4.0
14-16	28.7	39.8	29.7	25.3	18.8
16-18	34.3	27.0	27.4	28.0	30.1
18-20	16.6	14.6	15.7	19.0	21.5
20-22	7.0	} 9.2	17.1	15.0	20-24 14.2
22-25	5.2				
over 25	1.6	1.8	—	5.9	over 24 5.7
unknown	—	3.8	4.7	3.1	5.7
AGE on admission:					
under 16	10.7	14.2	13.6	10.0	10.0
(Individuals under 14)		(4)	(2)	(12)	
16-18	26.6	26.7	21.6	24.1	24.2
18-20	24.2	21.8	20.5	18.9	18.9
20-22	12.5	11.0	26.4	} 20.0	} 19.9
22-25	13.9	12.5	15.2		
25+	9.7	13.8	—	25.0	25.0
unknown	2.4	—	2.7	2.0	2.0
PARENTAGE					
both dead	43.4	45.0	41.7	39.3	42.7
father dead	16.4	14.0	18.8	20.9	18.5
mother dead	20.1	22.2	21.7	22.4	21.0
both alive	15.5	15.6	14.7	16.9	15.2
unknown	4.6	3.2	3.1	.5	2.6
LITERACY					
able to read	81.0	77.0	74.0	72.0	82.0
unable	19.0	23.0	26.0	28.0	17.0
					unkn. 1.0
able to write	35.0	36.0	39.0	38.0	53.0
unable	65.0	64.0	61.0	62.0	45.0
(% women signing marriage schedule by mark)				25.79%	unkn. 2.0 15.0%
SUNDAY SCHOOL					
yes	65.0	61.0	65.0	65.2	72.0
no	35.0	39.0	35.0	33.4	26.0
unknown	—	—	—	1.4	2.0

<sup>95</sup> Written by A. J. Lamb and Harry Von Tilzer. Maurice Wilson Disher. *Victorian Song* (1955), p. 190.



	1860-65	1865-69	1870-74	1875-79	'80, '81, '84-6
<b>PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT</b>					
Service	42.6	40.2	33.8	33.1	30.8
Service and factory	12.5	11.8	16.7	14.7	6.7
Factory (mills, bleachfields)	24.1	30.1	23.0	26.2	23.6
Seamstress, dress- making, sewing machinist, needlework)	3.8	3.8	7.8	4.9	5.5
Shops		.2	.5	.6	.6
Miscellaneous	6.6	5.9	4.8	8.5	21.3
No settled employment	10.3	7.2	10.0	4.5	7.3
Unknown	.1	.8	3.4	7.5	4.2
<b>VENEREAL DISEASE</b>					
Ex Lock Hospital	32.8	39.8	31.8	26.0	21.2
Not previously in Lock Hospital	60.9	60.2	67.6	71.7	77.4
Unknown	6.3	—	1.6	2.3	1.4
<b>Total number of girls in Magdalene Institute</b>					
	844	487	804	1,163	1,042
<b>Number ex Lock Hospital</b>					
	277	194	256	302	221
<b>Total number in Lock Hospital</b>					
	2,048	2,654	2,138	2,017	—

